

Wibler-Woods House
502 East Walker Street, southeast corner
of the intersection of East Walker and
Main Streets
Jefferson
Marion County
Texas

HABS No. TEX-153

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. TEX-153

WIBLER-WOODS HOUSE

Location: 502 East Walker Street, southeast corner of the intersection of East Walker and Main Streets, Jefferson, Marion County, Texas

Present Owner and Occupant: Perry M. Woods

Present Use: Residence

Statement of Significance: The style of this house is unusual for the north-east Texas region. It shows a distinctive French architectural influence, possibly from New Orleans.

PART 1. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: According to legend, the house was constructed during the Civil War.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The earliest known owner was George K. Wibler. In 1873, the property was confiscated by the sheriff and sold to Sampson Eagon for 3200 gold dollars (Marion County Deed Book J, p. 60). One year later, it was sold to W. R. Smith (Marion County Deed Book J, p. 409). Smith sold the property to D. E. Boice in 1882 (Marion County Deed Book P, p. 54). W. F. Jones bought the house in 1890 (Marion County Deed Book V, p. 581). In 1913, it became the property of J. M. Ardrey (Marion County Deed Book L-1, p. 214). From 1913 until 1920, it was owned by H. L. Rogers (Marion County Deed Book S-1, p. 275). J. L. Stutz bought the property in 1927 (Marion County Deed Book Z-1, p. 474-75). I. Lipman owned the property for a short time after which it was sold to H. H. Parsons in 1928 (Marion County Deed Book A-3, p. 386). The present owner, Perry M. Woods, acquired the property on August 10, 1932 (Marion County Deed Book M-2, p. 16).
4. Alterations and additions: The main addition consists of a small wing which was added to the south side of the house toward the west. This is believed to have been done in the early 1900's. At the same time, a screened porch was also added.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with Structure:

Legend maintains that the house was built for a French doctor. According to this same legend, windows, doors and interior shutters were manufactured in France, shipped to New Orleans and then to Jefferson via steamboat.

C. Sources of Information:

Marion County Deed Books, Marion County Courthouse, Jefferson, Texas.

Interview with Mrs. Perry Woods, September 1, 1966.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This single-story house has a modified central hall plan and classical portico similar to other houses of the period in northeast Texas. However, its parallel gable roofs and tall narrow windows with interior shutters are unusual for the area.

2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The house is approximately 48' (five-bay front) by 36' (four-bay flank). The addition on the south is approximately 12' by 16'.

2. Foundations: Brick piers.

3. Wall construction and finish: Sawn-timber frame, finished on the exterior with clapboards.

4. Portico and porch: The front door is strongly emphasized by a four-column wooden portico. The columns are rectangular with pedestals.

At the back, or south side, is a screened porch which is architecturally insignificant.

5. Chimneys: The chimneys have been removed. They were constructed from brick.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The main entrance has French doors with three panels. The center panel is circular. There is also a pair of French doors leading out of the dining room at the rear of the house opposite the main entrance. Both doors have side windows with three lights above a wooden panel and rectangular transoms with a two-light arrangement.

The main doorway is nicely detailed with molded trim and is crowned by a cornice with dentils.

- b. Windows: The windows are four-over-four wooden, double-hung sash, approximately 14' high. Each window sill is only slightly above floor-level.

The exterior trim is nicely molded. North and south windows are surmounted by cornices with dentils, the same treatment that appears on the main doorway. On the east and west elevations, the windows have crossets.

Non-functional bull's-eye windows relieve the austerity of the roof gables. These have heavy wooden trim.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Dominant features are the two parallel gables with a connecting roof at right angles. The roof, which is covered with asphalt shingles, has crestings on the ridges and finials at the terminal points. The portico has a flat roof with built-up roofing.
- b. Cornice: The gables have decorative bargeboards. The portico has a full entablature with cornice, frieze, and architrave.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The floor plan of this single-story house is a modified central hall type, similar to numerous houses in the classical mode dating from the same period. Two large rooms flank either side of the entry hall. Beyond the hall, is the dining room - a space that is wider than the hall - flanked by rooms that are smaller than the front rooms. The kitchen originally was separated from the main house by a breezeway, a common arrangement in the hot, humid climate of northeast Texas.

2. Flooring: Vertical-grain pine, approximately 5" wide.
 3. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls and ceilings are covered with plaster and finished with wallpaper throughout.
 4. Interior doors: Double, sliding doors, separating dining room and hall, are six-panel. All other doors are four panel. All of the panel-edges are heavily molded.
 5. Special decorative features:
 - a. Shutters: Tall, bifold shutters were used throughout the interior. Each window has four leaves one panel wide and two panels tall, making a total of 16 panels per window. There are four solid panels, four panels with vertical louvers and eight panels with horizontal louvers.
 - b. Trim: Wood throughout. Door and window casings and the floor bases are all heavily molded.
 6. Hardware: Iron butts. Iron latch hardware with porcelain knobs.
 7. Lighting: Modern electrical fixtures.
 8. Heating: Unit gas-heaters.
- D. Site and Surroundings:

The main door faces north on a nearly dead-level site. Although the building occupies one half block, there are no significant landscape features. The only outbuilding is a small garage to the south.

Prepared by Willard B. Robinson, AIA
Supervisory Architect, HABS
National Park Service
September 1966

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were made in 1966 during a summer project financed by the National Park Service to record 16 structures in Jefferson and the near-by area. The summer recording team received the cooperation of numerous citizens and organizations who provided office space, lodgings, board, and research assistance. Among the cooperators were the Dan Lester Drilling Company, the Excelsior Hotel, Mrs. A. K. Payne, the Jessie Allen Wise Garden Club, and the Marion County Chamber of Commerce.

The project was under the direction of A. Lewis Koue of the Historic American Buildings Survey's Western Office in San Francisco. Supervisor of the recording team was Willard B. Robinson, AIA, of Texas Technological College. The team was composed of student architects David L. Bouse of the University of Nebraska, Bob J. Fong of the University of Idaho, Donald Quackenbush of Washington State University, and Robert M. Swanson of the University of Texas. Photographs were made by National Park Service Photographer, Jack E. Boucher.